

WHAT RESULT DO WE WANT?

All people in North Carolina are supported by a K-12 educational system that values diversity, equity, and inclusion for its students, faculty, staff, and communities.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

School disciplinary action is a strong predictor of student academic performance and high school completion. Less education can lead to fewer opportunities for high-paying employment that provides health insurance and access to other social support.¹

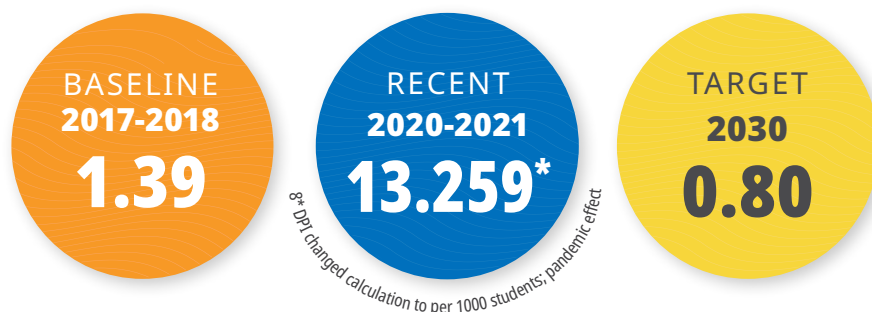
HNC 2030 HEADLINE INDICATOR:
The short-term suspension rate in middle and high school educational facilities

WHAT DOES THIS INDICATOR MEASURE?

A short-term suspension means that the student is out-of-school for 10 days or less. The rate is derived from a count of the number of short-term suspensions and may reflect multiple suspensions by one or more students. The data includes suspensions across all grades:

- Data are disaggregated by grade, race, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability
- No student level data – just rates per 1000 students

BASELINE DATA FROM HNC 2030



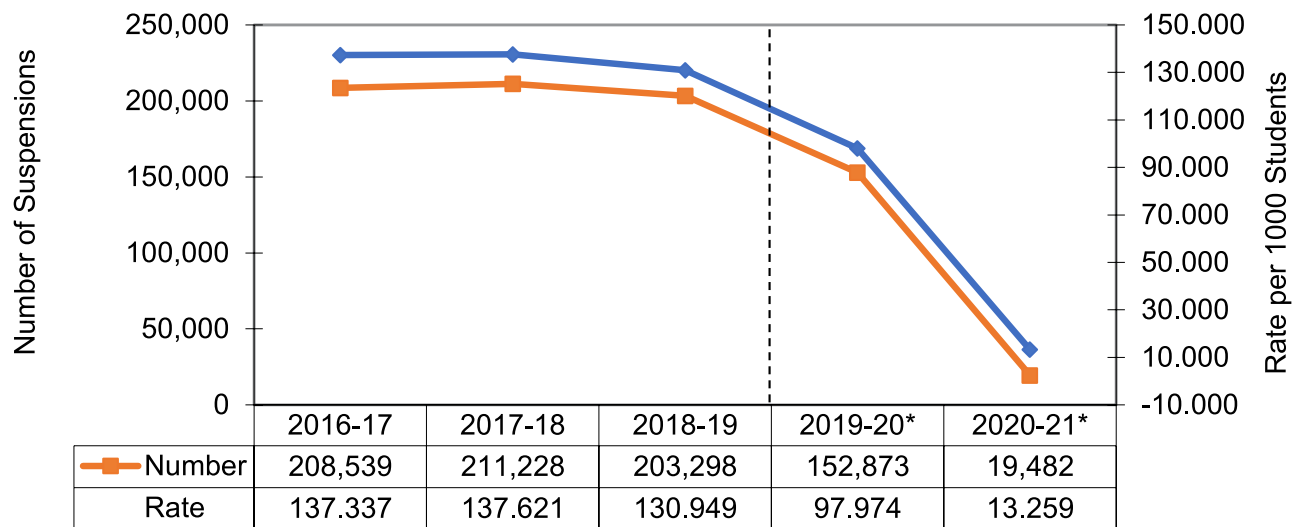
HOW ARE WE DOING?

While most of the visualized data in [Figure 21 - 24](#) represent suspensions, not numbers of unique students, it is important to note that of the 19,482 short-term suspensions in 2020-2021 school year, 15,128 individual students were affected by these short-term suspensions for an average of 1.29 short-term suspensions per student. The average duration of a single short-term suspension was 2.84 days.²

CURRENT DATA TRENDED OVER TIME

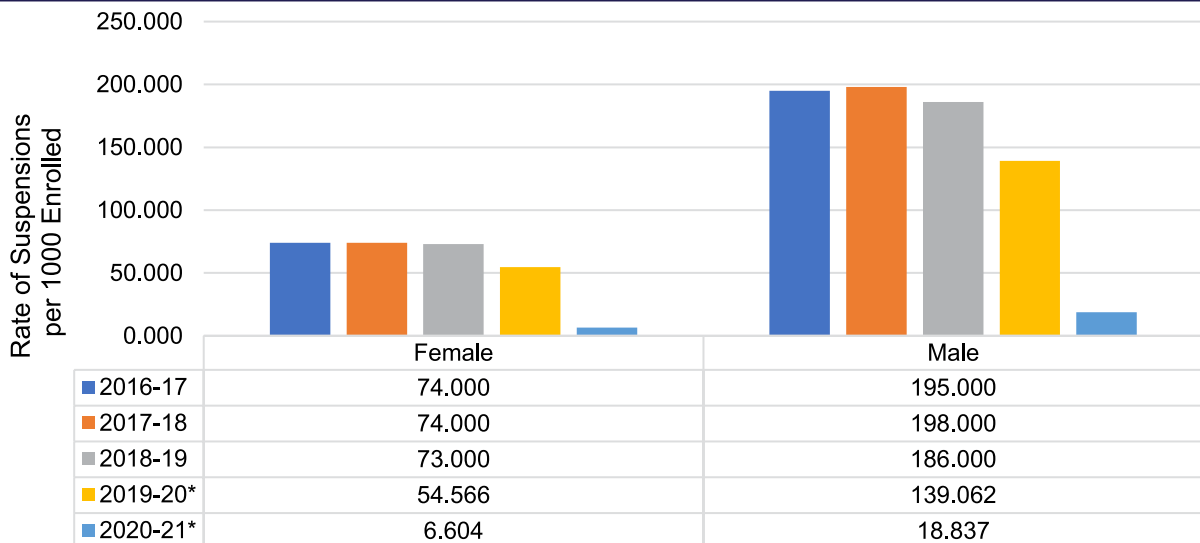
Figures 21-24 were reproduced with permission from the NC Department of Public Instruction Center for Safer Schools.³⁻⁶

Figure 21. Short-term suspensions for all acts reported, 2016-2017 to 2020-2021



Note: *In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, starting in March of the 2019-2020 school year and continuing through the 2020-2021 school year, public school units across the state employed unprecedented methods to ensure continued student learning by utilizing various modes of instruction and student outreach. As such, caution should be taken when comparing data reported for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years to data reported for prior and subsequent years.

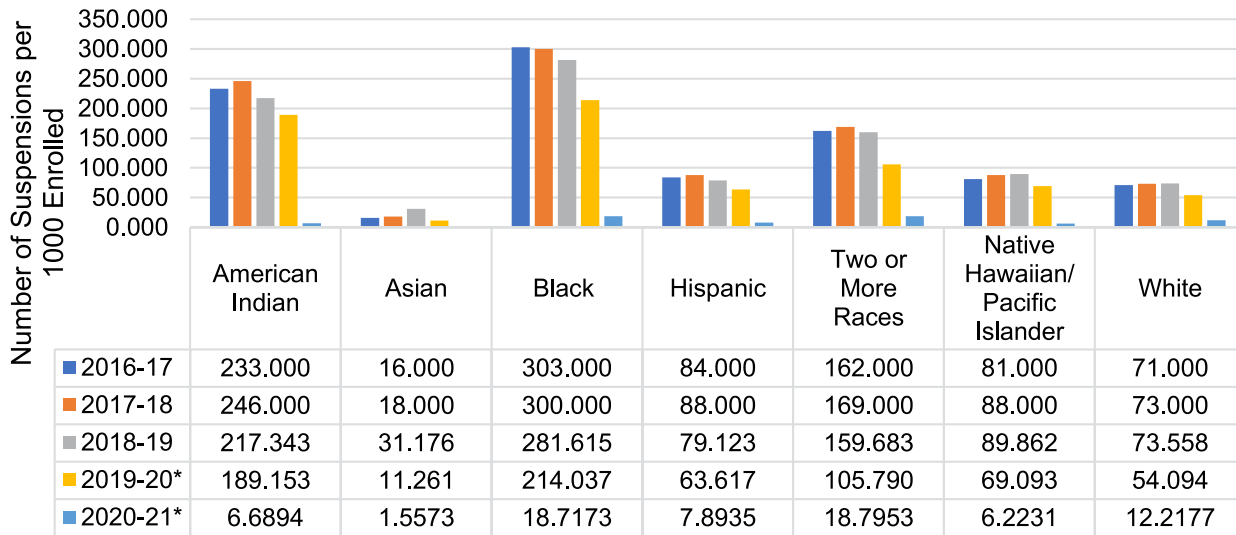
Figure 22. Short-term suspension rate (per 1,000 enrolled), by gender



Consistent with previous years, males received more short-term suspensions than females in 2020-2021. The rate of short-term suspensions for male students was 2.85 times the rate for females in 2020-2021. In 2020-2021, both the rate and number of short-term suspensions for both males and females decreased from the previous academic year.

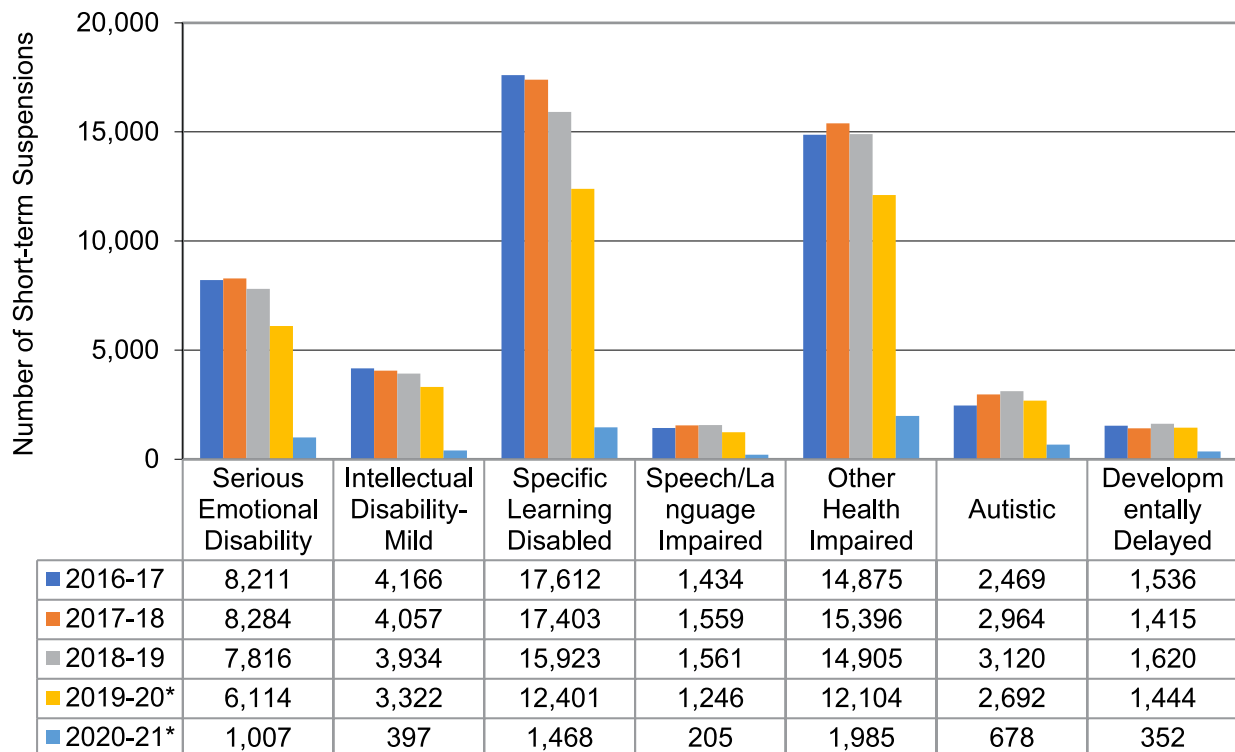
SHORT TERM SUSPENSIONS

Figure 23. Short-term suspensions rate (per 1,000 enrolled) by race/ethnicity



In 2020-2021, the rate of short-term suspensions for all race/ethnicities decreased when compared to the previous academic years. The largest decrease was for Asian students (19.5%), Black students (91.3%) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students (91.0%).

Figure 24. Short-term suspensions by exceptional children (EC) status



In 2020-2021, 32.1% of short-term suspensions were given to exceptional children. This percentage is higher than the 27.6% in the 2019-2020 academic year. The number of short-term suspensions decreased for the seven exceptional children categories most frequently reported.



LET'S SHIFT THE PERSPECTIVE FROM "WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?" TO "WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU?"

- Blodgett & Dorado, 2016, p. 59

THE STORY BEHIND THE CURVE

"Trauma-informed school-wide interventions are associated with decreased office discipline referrals, physical aggression incidents, and out-of-school suspensions."⁷ Suspensions are often linked to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Blodgett & Dorado (2016) reviewed the literature for trauma-informed school practice and alignment with educational practice.⁸ Communities with higher ACE scores had "higher rates of suspension and unexcused absences and lower rates of graduation from high school and progression to post-secondary school than communities with relatively low prevalence of ACEs."⁹

WHAT OTHER DATA DO WE NEED?

Additional data is needed to confirm the effects of trauma-informed school-wide interventions, especially on student outcomes. We are very early in a paradigm shift in education policy and practice that requires strong science to develop a unifying framework for educational reform.

WHAT COULD WORK TO TURN THE CURVE?

- Develop statewide system of restorative justice programs
- Disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline, beginning with preschool, by reducing the use of school suspensions and expulsions and increasing the use of counseling services
- Implement trainings and policies for trauma-informed schools
- Increase racial, ethnic, gender, and disability status diversity among school and childcare leadership and staff and the institutions that train them
- Include suspension rate in measures of school quality
- Support systemwide training throughout the education system to raise awareness of implicit bias

RECOMMENDED READING/LISTENING

Blodgett, C. & Dorado, J. (2016). A selected review of trauma-informed school practice and alignment with educational practice. California Endowment: San Francisco, CA. <https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2101/2019/12/Selected-Review-of-Trauma-Informed-School-Practice-2016.pdf>

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Center for Safer Schools, Consolidated Data Report (2020-2021) <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/14171/open>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation – County Health Rankings What Works for Health
<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/strategies?f%5B0%5D=health-factor%3AEducation>

NC PARTNERS WHO CAN HELP US

PARTNER/POTENTIAL PARTNER	WEBSITE LINK
Center for Racial Equity in Education (CREED)	https://www.creed-nc.org/
Color of Education	https://colorofeducation.org/
Made in Durham	https://madeindurham.org/
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction	https://www.dpi.nc.gov/
Public School Forum of North Carolina	https://www.ncforum.org/
Racial Equity Institute, LLC	https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/
Southern Coalition for Social Justice-Youth Justice Project	https://southerncoalition.org/youth-justice-project/
The Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships (CYFCP)	https://cyfcp.uncg.edu/
Village of Wisdom	https://www.villageofwisdom.org/
Working to Extend Anti-Racist Education (we are)	https://www.weare-nc.org/